121

(11-9) Micah 4:1–2. What Special Meaning Do These Verses Have for Latter-day Saints?

President Harold B. Lee gave the following commentary on these verses:

"With the coming of the pioneers to establish the Church in the tops of the mountains, our early leaders declared this to be the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecy that out of Zion should go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

"I have often wondered what that expression meant, that out of Zion should go forth the law. Years ago I went with the Brethren to the Idaho Falls Temple, and I heard in that inspired prayer of the First Presidency a definition of the meaning of that term—'out of Zion shall go forth the law.' Note what they said:

"'We thank thee that thou hast revealed to us that those who gave us our constitutional form of government were wise in thy sight and that thou didst raise them up for the very purpose of putting forth that sacred document [as revealed in Doctrine and Covenants 101]. . . . We pray that kings and rulers and the peoples of all nations under heaven may be persuaded of the blessings enjoyed by the people of this land by reason of their freedom under thy guidance and be constrained to adopt similar governmental systems, thus to fulfill the ancient prophecy of Isaiah and Micah that ‘. . . out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.’" (Improvement Era, Oct. 1945, p. 504.)

"The history of nations records the efforts of statesmen to adopt these basic principles as the basis of sound fundamental structures. I have often speculated as to the meaning of the Lord’s injunction to our early leaders, not only to keep his commandments, but also to assist in bringing forth his work according to his commandments, with the promise that they would then be blessed.

"I have often wondered what that expression meant, that out of Zion should go forth the law. Years ago I went with the Brethren to the Idaho Falls Temple, and I heard in that inspired prayer of the First Presidency a definition of the meaning of that term—‘out of Zion shall go forth the law.’" (Improvement Era, Oct. 1945, p. 504.)

"The history of nations records the efforts of statesmen to adopt these basic principles as the basis of sound fundamental structures. I have often speculated as to the meaning of the Lord’s injunction to our early leaders, not only to keep his commandments, but also to assist in bringing forth his work according to his commandments, with the promise that they would then be blessed.

"Also, they were to seek to bring forth and to establish Zion. All of this emphasized what the Church was told by the Lord in another revelation. He said, ‘For if you will that I give unto you a place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you.’ (D&C 78:7.)

"You will note that it was not merely enough to be good; all must also be willing to bring forth his work and to bring forth and establish Zion. This meant to work and labor with all one's might, mind, and strength if he would obtain a place in the celestial world.

"Many people, so these prophets said, would say, ‘Show me your path, that we may walk in your way.’” (In Conference Report, Manchester England Area Conference 1971, pp. 138–39.)

(11-10) Micah 4:8–13. If Jerusalem Is Overthrown and Her People Scattered, How Will She Then Become Great?

Micah used the figure of travail or childbirth to illustrate that Judah would bring upon herself the pain out of which would eventually come a new life in the Lord. Shortly she would be driven from her city and find herself a captive of Babylon. This prophecy is amazing because Assyria was mistress of the world in Micah's day, Babylon being only a province of Assyria. This part of Micah's vision projected nearly 130 years into the future, but time is nothing to a prophet. Then, looking several millennia into the future, Micah saw Israel return in the strength of God. Using the symbol of horns like iron and hooves like brass, he predicted that Israel would trample her enemies as easily as an ox threshes grain.

"This passage has great significance for Latter-day Saints because Jesus referred to it when He visited the Nephites. After speaking of the gathering of Israel in the latter days, Jesus used Micah's prophecy to depict the kind of destruction that awaited the Gentiles of that period if they did not repent (see 3 Nephi 20:17–21)."